

It is important to understand that a desire, hatred, or fear arises only because of the way one interprets one's circumstances. If one considers something to be pleasant, then a desire arises.

To overcome such a desire, one can reflect on its unpleasantness.

For example, if we hate taking a bitter medicine, we can think of its health giving properties.

By thinking of its pleasantness in this way, we can tolerate the distaste.

Similarly, to overcome one's attachment to things of the world, the Buddha taught the reflection on the threefold nature of all things (*tilakkhaṇa*): instability (*anicca*), painfulness (*dukkha*), and impersonality (*anattā*).

Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi

**Precise Translations by
Venerable Dr. Punnaji as:**

Personalization of the Body

&

Personalization of the Experience of the Body
Giving Rise to Notion of “Self”

Pain and pleasures are real, but the mind tends to
cling on to how the body feels and personalize
these experiences - that is what causes suffering.

Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi

From A Scientific Perspective



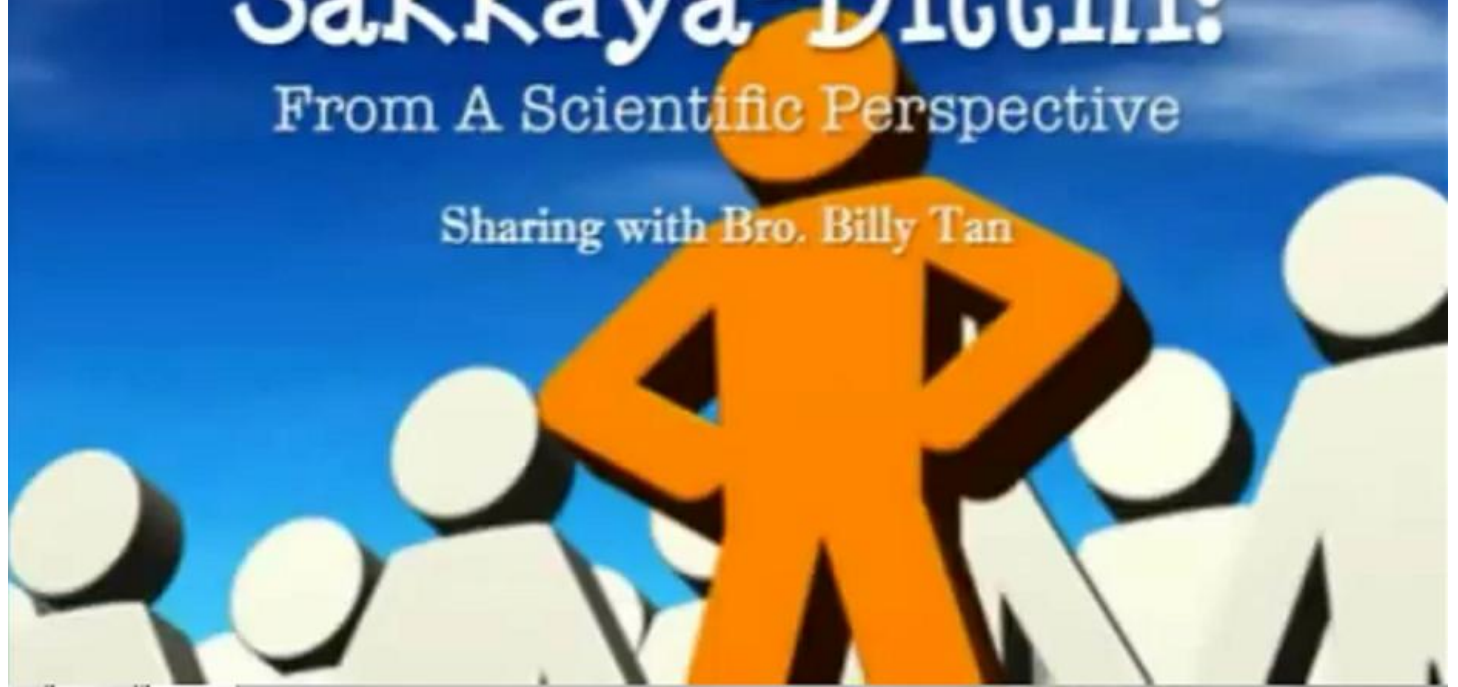
Bandar Utama
Buddhist
Society

Sunday 20th July 2014, 9:00am

Sakkāya-Ditthi:

From A Scientific Perspective

Sharing with Bro. Billy Tan



The reason why I specifically mention scientific perspective is because the phrase “*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*” can be translated in a few ways. So I am using a scientific translation and explaining how the bringing in concepts from science and findings from neuroscience and psychology, we can explain and get a better understanding of the meaning of “*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*” from a scientific perspective.

Now I begin by basically drawing your attention to the concept of the center of the Universe.

“Center of the Universe?”

If we go back long time ago, once upon a time, in ancient days, people always thought that the center of the universe is the earth, that all the stars and the sun, they revolve around earth where we stand and the earth was flat at that time.



Then round about 500 years ago in 16th century AD along came 3 notable philosophers and mathematicians.



First, there was Nicolaus Copernicus, followed by Giordano Bruno, and Galileo Galilei, and what they discovered, by using simple little telescopes, peering into the sky they found the way the planets were moving, that the center of the Universe was not earth; that they discovered that planets were moving around the sun. And that was the concept of the center of the Universe in the 16th century.

Now let's fast forward to today, 21st century, where is the center of the Universe? Where do you think it is?



Well, this is where it is. Every single one of us is so much stimulated by our environment; feeling pleasurable, feeling painful, or neither pleasurable nor painful, we begin to react and then we begin to form this notion "I am at the center of the Universe." "I am the person that is most important." So this is a very common concept by most people that is because of the way the environment stimulate sense, our sense organs, leading us to get this sense of self-centeredness. And this self-centeredness is when the sense of "Self" comes to mind; when the sense of "Self" arises in the mind.

So today's sharing we're going to take a quick look at what is this thing called “Self.”



SYNOPSIS



- What is this thing called “self”?
- How does the “self” arise?
- Does the “self” really exist?
- What is “**Sakkāya–diṭṭhi**” (self–perspective)?

*Exploring the Buddha’s teaching
from a scientific perspective.*

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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

How does the “Self” arise? Does the “Self” really exist? And what is the meaning of this term “*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*”, which is sometimes translated as the self-perspective or the personality perspective. And we're going to explore the teachings of the Buddha by drawing from findings from science and explain “*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*” from a scientific perspective. So let’s take look at what are the various perspectives of this thing called the “Self”, the notion of the “Self.”



The "Self" Perspectives...



A. RELIGION (Theistic)

➤ Is the "self" concept the same as the "soul"? Is it eternal?

If we look at it from the religious perspective, then there are those theistic religions. Those religions that believe in the creator god and they define "Self" as soul, so the question is, is this "Self" concept the same as what these theistic religions defined as the soul? And whether it is or it is not; then is it eternal because these theistic religions have defined the soul as an eternal soul.



The "Self" Perspectives...



A. RELIGION (Theistic)

➤ Is the "self" concept the same as the "soul"? Is it eternal?

B. PHILOSOPHY

➤ Is the "self" an emotion, a concept, or a rational conclusion?

Now we can also look at it from a perspective of philosophy. In that sense then are we talking about an emotion? Is the "Self" an emotion? Is "Self" a concept? Or is the "Self" a rational conclusion?



The "Self" Perspectives...



A. RELIGION (Theistic)

➤ Is the "self" concept the same as the "soul"? Is it eternal?

B. PHILOSOPHY

➤ Is the "self" an emotion, a concept, or a rational conclusion?

C. PSYCHOLOGY

➤ How does the notion of "self" arise in the mind? How does mind justify such a notion?

We can also look at it from the perspective of psychology, dealing with the mind and how the mind works. So how does this notion of "Self" arise in the mind? How does mind justify such a notion?



The "Self" Perspectives...



A. RELIGION (Theistic)

➤ Is the "self" concept the same as the "soul"? Is it eternal?

B. PHILOSOPHY

➤ Is the "self" an emotion, a concept, or a rational conclusion?

C. PSYCHOLOGY

➤ How does the notion of "self" arise in the mind? How does mind justify such a notion?

D. BIOLOGY / ANATOMY

➤ Where does the "self" reside... in the brain, the heart, the body?

And we can also say, alright, then let's take a look at where it may or may not reside, so we look at it biologically. Where does this sense of "Self" reside? Is it in the brain? Is it in the heart? Or is it in the body? And of course a lot of scientists will say, "Oh then the brain is the activity that gives rise to the mind so it must be somewhere in the brain." Now if it is in the brain then we look at it from the field on neuroscience, which brain region or function defines or determines this sense of "Self". Is there a brain region that does that?



The "Self" Perspectives...



- A. RELIGION (Theistic)
 - Is the "self" concept the same as the "soul"? Is it eternal?
- B. PHILOSOPHY
 - Is the "self" an emotion, a concept, or a rational conclusion?
- C. PSYCHOLOGY
 - How does the notion of "self" arise in the mind? How does mind justify such a notion?
- D. BIOLOGY / ANATOMY
 - Where does the "self" reside... in the brain, the heart, the body?
- E. NEUROSCIENCE
 - Which brain region or function defines or determines the "self"?

And finally we can also look at it from the perspective of evolution. If we look at it then, the human being has evolved to what we are today, so the question is has the notion of "Self" evolved only in human beings? What about other animals, especially those domesticated animals, your pets, your dogs, your cats, we know that when we treat the dogs in a certain way at home they seem to behave like they have a sense of "Self", so the question is that, "Has the notion of "Self" evolved only among human beings?", or actually, "Do animals also think they have a sense of "Self?"



The "Self" Perspectives...



- A. RELIGION (Theistic)
 - Is the "self" concept the same as the "soul"? Is it eternal?
- B. PHILOSOPHY
 - Is the "self" an emotion, a concept, or a rational conclusion?
- C. PSYCHOLOGY
 - How does the notion of "self" arise in the mind? How does mind justify such a notion?
- D. BIOLOGY / ANATOMY
 - Where does the "self" reside... in the brain, the heart, the body?
- E. NEUROSCIENCE
 - Which brain region or function defines or determines the "self"?
- F. EVOLUTION
 - Has the notion of "self" evolved only in human beings? What about animals, especially domestic pets like dogs and cats?

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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

So these are many daunting questions, but today we are just going to ask a simple question, what is "Self?" How does it arise? And we are going to explore this from a scientific perspective by examining and understanding of the term "*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*".

So we begin by asking; now if we talk about the "Self" before we even define what is the "Self", we just look at ourselves as an organism. Who am I?



The Experience of "Seeing"



- Experience arises dependent on the presence of necessary conditions:



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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

Let's take a simple example of seeing. To be able to see something there is very much dependent on the present of necessary conditions. We see because of the present of these conditions. If these conditions are not present, we will not be able to see. So we take a look at this simple little example here of a lady looking at the dog.

Now she is able to see the dog because there is light; because without light, she can't see the dog. If it is completely pitch dark, she can't see the dog. So light is reflected from the dog, and what happens to this reflected light, it enters the eyeball, the sense organ.



The Experience of “Seeing”



- Experience arises dependent on the presence of necessary conditions:



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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

So another word, what goes into the eyeball is light reflected from the object from the dog. It is not the dog that enters the eyeball; it is actually light reflected from the dog. And when light reflected from the dog enters the eyeball it strikes the back of the eyeball, a region called retina, where it actually triggers light sensitive cells and causes us to pay attention and when we pay attention this process of perception arises. And this is actually also called “*pañca-khandha*”, the Five Aggregates.



The Experience of "Seeing"



- Experience arises dependent on the presence of necessary conditions:



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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

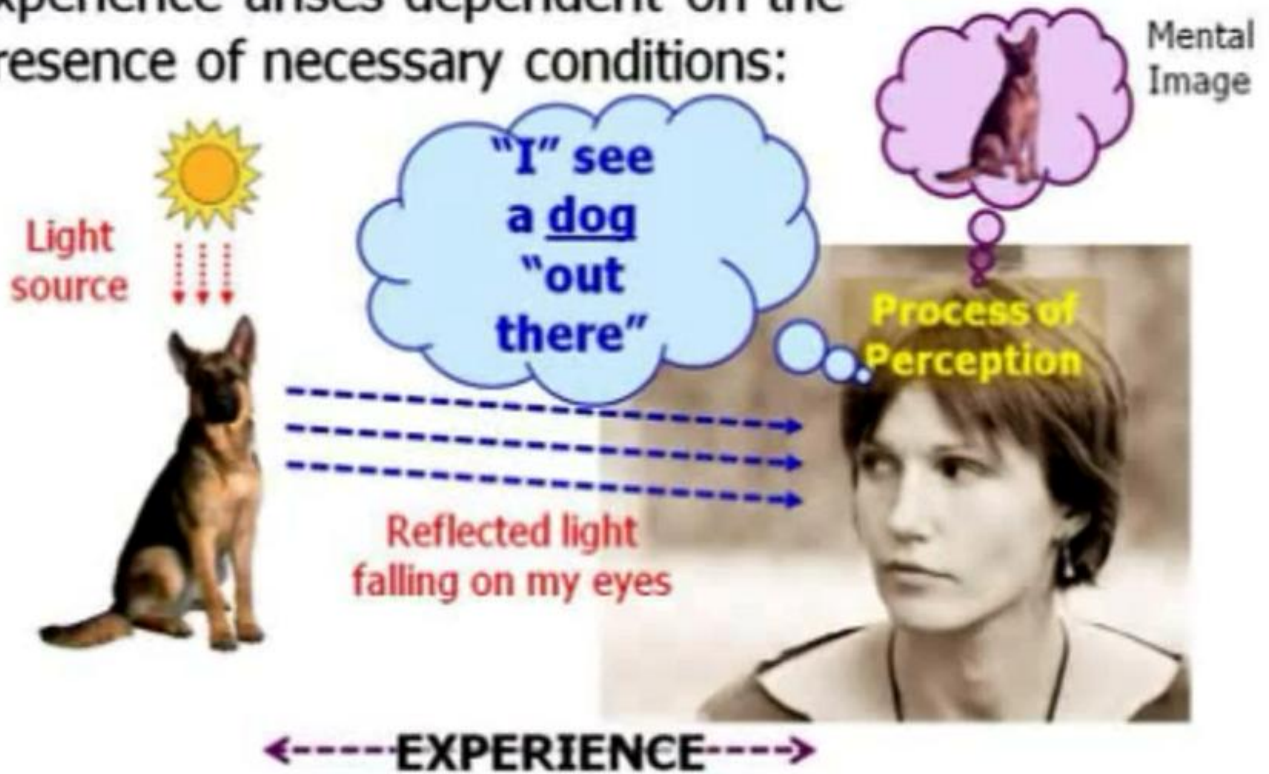
The Five Aggregates arise as a result of the activity of the central nervous system because light has struck the back of the eyeball retina and stimulated the light-sensitive cells in the retina, and so we are able to begin to experience this sense of seeing. So this is the “*pañca-khandha*”, which is the arising of the process of perception. And with that a mental image is formed in the head that in the mind that we have now seen a dog. Now all we can describe here is simply the experience of seeing; that is all we can say. In the experience of seeing there is only the seeing. But the mind works in very strange ways. When this experience arises, what does the mind do? The mind begins with a simple little thought, "I see the dog out there!"



The Experience of "Seeing"



- Experience arises dependent on the presence of necessary conditions:



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So there are 3 components here: (1) the "I" (2) the dog (3) out there. So there is an "I" thinking that it sees the dog, which is the object out there, and this is how the mind reacts when these sense organs are being stimulated and impure mind will react in this manner. So with this reaction the mind begins to break down that experience, so there is the "I" and there is the "out there".



The Experience of "Seeing"



- Experience arises dependent on the presence of necessary conditions:



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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

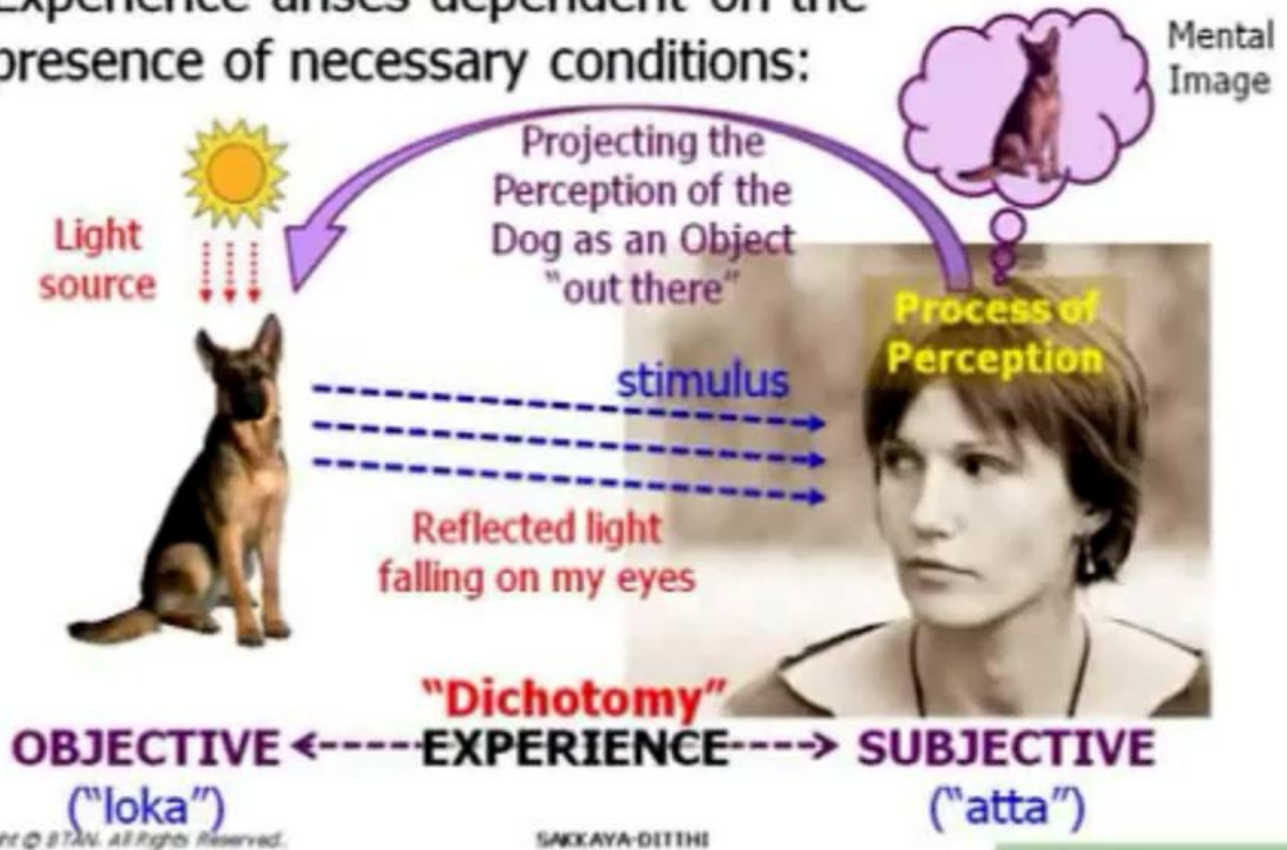
So the mind breaks down this experience by processing it and says, "Oh it's projecting the perception that there is a dog which is the object out there." And when it begins to do that, it breaks the experience into two parts; the breaking of experience into two parts is called dichotomy; that is breaking it into two parts.



The Experience of "Seeing"



- Experience arises dependent on the presence of necessary conditions:



What are the two parts: (1) the subjective part and (2) the objective part.

The subjective part in Pali is called "*Attā*" and the objective part is called "*Loka*", the world. "*Attā*" often translated as the "Self" and "*Loka*", the world. So the mind begins to project this experience and say "Oh I see the dog out there", projecting the perception of a dog existing out there.



THE EXPERIENCE OF SEEING



VISUAL EXPERIENCE:

- Light is reflected from object;
- Reflected light entering the eye;
- Stimulation of cone and rod cells in the retina of the eyeball;
- Process of visual perception arises.

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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

So this is really what happens in the mind whenever the sense organ is stimulated. And it's not only with our sight, sense of sight. The point I'm trying to point out here is very important; this is something a lot of us don't think about. Are we really seeing the dog or are we only seeing an image of the dog? We are not seeing the dog. What are we really seeing? We are seeing an image of the dog. Light reflected from the dog entering our eyeball is the image, and this is called "*Rūpa*." And therefore this stimulation of the eyeball gives rise to the process of perception and this mental image arises. So this is really what happens.



THE EXPERIENCE OF SEEING



VISUAL EXPERIENCE:

RUPA

- Light is reflected from object;
- Reflected light entering the eye;
- Stimulation of cone and rod cells in the retina of the eyeball;
- Process of visual perception arises.

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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

Now we look at the experience of seeing, then we examine this visual experience, the experience of seeing. What happened there in this experience of seeing: light is reflected from object, reflected light entering the eye, stimulating the cone and rod cells in the retina of the eyeball at the back of the eyeball, so the eyeball has being stimulated. And finally the process of this visual perception arises; then we have not seen something, the experience of seeing.

Now if we exam what has happened there. This reflected light is the "*Rūpa*", the image of an object out there.



THE EXPERIENCE OF SEEING



VISUAL EXPERIENCE:

- Light is reflected from object;
- Reflected light entering **RUPA** **Cakkhu**;
- Stimulation of cone and rod cells in the retina of the eyeball;
- Process of visual perception arises.

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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

The eyeball is the "*Cakkhu*" in Pali and that is the sense organ.

And this process of perception, the perception that arises in the mind, is the awareness of having perceived something from the eye. And that is the "*Cakkhu-Viññāṇa*". So some call this the "Eye Consciousness", but actually the word "Consciousness", I would like to explain. "*Viññāṇa*" is often translated conventionally or traditionally as "Consciousness". Now that is basically referring to the awareness of an object being perceived. But we have to be very clear from a scientific perspective; the word "Consciousness" has a different meaning from what we have understood.



THE EXPERIENCE OF SEEING



VISUAL EXPERIENCE:

- Light is reflected from object;
- Reflected light entering
- Stimulating cone and rod cells in the retina of the eyeball;
- Process of visual perception arises.

RUPA

Cakkhu

Cakkhu-
Viññāna

“Consciousness”, in the field of neuroscience and psychology, that's not only referred to an awareness of the environment. “Consciousness” in the field of science also refers to the awareness of “Self”, so the more accurate I would say, the more useful definition of "*Viññāṇa*", the eye awareness of the perception, then the word "*Viññāṇa*" is more precisely translated as perception; that we've perceived an object through the eye sense organ and that is "*Viññāṇa*".

So we look at these 3 components: (1) the "*Rūpa*" (2) the "*Cakkhu*" (3) the "*Cakkhu-Viññāṇa*." The "*Rūpa*" image of light reflected from the object, the sense organ the eye "*Cakkhu*", and the perception of what has been perceived.



THE EXPERIENCE OF SEEING



VISUAL EXPERIENCE:

RUPA

Phassa

is reflected from object;

➤ Reflected light entering

Cakkhu

➤ Stimulate cone and rod cells in the retina of the eyeball;

Cakkhu-Viññāna

➤ Process of visual perception arises.

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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

When the three come together we call this "*Phassa*". "*Phassa*" is traditionally translated as "Contact" but actually a more precise definition would be "Experience", "Sense Experience", or "Visual Experience" in the case of seeing. So this visual experience is "*Phassa*". So when the three come together, we have this visual experience "*Phassa*".

Now this is only talking about the eye, what about the other sense organs; they are basically operating in the same manner, so environmental activities stimulate our sense organs. We have just discussed the seeing, which is reflected light stimulating the cone and rod cells in the eyeball.



SENSE EXPERIENCES



Environmental activities stimulate the sense organs:

- SIGHT: Reflected light stimulates cone and rod cells in the retina of the eyeball;
- HEARING: Air vibration stimulates the ear-drum;
- TOUCH: Pressure, temperature, vibration, chemicals stimulate tactile sensory receptors under the skin;
- SMELL: Odorant molecules bind to receptor cells in the olfactory bulb;
- TASTE: Flavour molecules react chemically with gustatory sense receptors in the taste buds;

What about hearing? Hearing is really air vibration stimulating the ear drum. So when you think you hear someone playing the piano and we often say, "Oh I hear the piano." Are you really hearing the piano? You're not. What are you hearing? When somebody presses a note on the piano, it causes the hammer to strike on the string, and the string on the piano vibrates the sound board, and that sound board vibrates the air, so it is air vibration caused by the hammer striking the string. This air vibration is what enters your ear and stimulates your eardrum, and the eardrum when it is vibrated it stimulates three tiny little bones in the back and a whole lot of chain reaction happens. So you are really hearing air vibration coming from the piano; you're not hearing the piano so to speak; but it's not the piano that is entering your ear; it is air vibration that is entering your ear. It is an image of the sound produced by the piano and then the same goes for the sense of touch.



SENSE EXPERIENCES



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When there is pressure on the skin of your body; when there's temperature, vibration, or chemicals coming into contact with the skin on your body. They stimulate these tactile sensory receptors under the skin and that actually begins to react and sends messages to the brain. So we have this sense of touch because of that. The same goes for the sense of smell which is odorant molecules released by the food that binds to the receptor cells in the olfactory bulb and that is smelling, sense of smell. We are not smelling the food. You know if you come across a bowl of curry laksa and you smell the smell of curry. It is not the curry that is entering your nose and it is the molecules released by the curry. So be aware it is not the object that you are experiencing. It is something coming from the object that you are experiencing. And taste is the same, flavor molecules reacting chemically with gustatory sense receptors in the taste buds.



SENSE EXPERIENCES



Environmental activities stimulate the sense organs:

- SIGHT: Reflected light stimulates cone and rod cells in the retina of the eyeball;
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❑ **Stimulations trigger sensation ("saññā") and arouse feeling ("vedanā") in nervous system.**

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So basically all our 5 senses are not experiencing objects so to speak. We are experiencing an image of the object. Light reflected from the object, air vibrations produced by the object, the pressure-temperature vibration, chemicals coming from the object, the odorant molecules released by the object, or the flavor molecules released by the object. So these are the sense experience.

And with this sense experience the stimulation triggers sensation, "*saññā*", and aroused feeling, "*vedanā*", in the nervous system, so the nervous system is being aroused with the sensation and the feeling.



SENSE EXPERIENCES

Environment → **“I” see/hear/touch...
an object
“out there”** → Sense organs:

→ **SEE:** Light rays from objects in the environment strike the eye; chemicals on the skin;

→ **SMELL:** Odorant molecules bind to receptor cells in the olfactory bulb;

→ **TASTE:** Flavour molecules react chemically with gustatory sense receptors in the taste buds;

☐ **Stimulations trigger sensation (“saññā”) and arouse feeling (“vedanā”) in nervous system.**

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And when that is aroused, the mind begins to come up with this thought: "I see or hear or touch or smell or sense this object out there."

So I see, hear, smell, taste, or touch this object out there; that's what happens to the mind. It breaks the experience into 2 parts: (1) the "I" which is a subjective part, (2) and the "out there" which is the objective part; the "Attā" and the "Loka".



So let's examine the meaning of this concept called "*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*" then. How does that come about? I basically call it when the "Self" comes to mind; that's what "*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*" means.

But the word "*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*" is interpreted by a number of people in slightly different ways. So let's take a look at what are some of the definitions interpreted by some of the scholars.



SAKKĀYA–DIṬṬHI



DEFINITIONS :

- **“theory of soul, heresy of individuality, speculation as to the eternity or otherwise of one's own individuality”** (Rhys Davids & Stede)
- **“the view of individuality”** (Gethin)
- **“views on the existing group”** (Harvey)
- **“personality-belief”** (Walshe)
- **“self-identity views”** (Thanissaro)
- **“identity view”** (Bhikkhu Bodhi)

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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

We have this one by Rhys Davids, which is the “theory of soul”. Then we have this one by Gethin, which is the “view of individuality”. And we have the other three which are similar, “views of existing group”, which is the “*pañca-khandha*”. And “personality-belief” by Walshe. “Self identity views” by Thanissaro. And “identity view” by Bhikkhu Bodhi.

Basically these are all the different interpretations of this term “*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*”.

Neuroscience
explains...

Sakkāya–diṭṭhi

How “self” perspective arises:
Personalization of the body and its
experience into the notion of a “self”.



If we were to look at it from a scientific perspective, how do we interpret this? We break this word down "*Sakkāya*"-"*Diṭṭhi*". Take this simple one first; "*Diṭṭhi*" we all know what "*Diṭṭhi*" is; it is a perspective or point of view; a point of view or a perspective. So "*Sakkāya*" is made of two root words: "*Sak*" and "*Kāya*". But the word "*Sak*" is also interpreted in a number of ways, and "*kāya*" is also interpreted in two different ways. The word "*Sak*" is sometimes interpreted as “something that exists”; it is also sometimes interpreted as “ownership”, taking ownership of something. And "*Sak*" is also interpreted as “having something”. "*kāya*" is usually interpreted as the “body” but sometimes in the context of this phrase “*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*”; it is interpreted as "oneself"; having oneself, having the perspective of the personality.

So therefore "*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*" can be interpreted as the “personality perspective” or from the scientific way we basically say it is the “ownership of the body”. It is the perspective that we own the body that we are having. And this is how the "Self" perspective arises from a scientific perspective. It's the personalization of the body and the experiences of the body into the notion of a “Self”. That's really how this sense of “Self” arises when we personalize.

The word personalize is coming from the Pali word called “*Upādāna*.” “*Upādāna*” is often translated as “clinging”. Some call it “attachment” and my teacher Venerable Dr. Punnaaji calls it personalization; when we personalize something that is “*Upādāna*”. So we personalize the body and the experience of the body and call this "Self".

Because when we experience something and this thought arises and say "I" see something out there, so what is the "I" that we can point to, to say this is the "I". The thing that we can actually represent the "I" is the body and say, "Oh this body is 'I'." And this is very often a mistaken view that the body is "I".

So let's explore this further from a scientific perspective by using Neuroscience to explain some of this basic understanding.



If you take a look at this picture, this image here of Gal Gadot as Wonder Woman, you will find that many components, there are many different colors; there is of course her face and all the details of her face, so many things in there and you notice that when you are looking at this object, your eyeball does not see the whole object. Your eyeball is darting around picking up bits and pieces from the object; that's what it is. Take a look at her; your eyeball is really focusing on only one small part of this image at any one time; you're not seeing the whole image in one go, but because it is picking up bits and pieces from various parts of this image, so there's a lot of information going to the brain and processed by the brain. So when you see a simple image like that, an image of someone, there are many things going to the brain that is being processed by the brain. Millions, hundreds of millions, and millions of pieces of information coming from the eyeball entering the brain and the brain has to process all that.

"NO SEAT OF THE SELF"



*Dr Wolf Singer, Director
Max Planck Institute For Brain Research*

So let's take a look at what the scientists have to say about this activity in the brain.

So I am referring you to this well-known brain scientist Dr. Wolf Singer. He's the director of brain research at the Max Planck Institute for Brain Research, and he actually participates regularly with the Dalai Lama's Mind and Life Institute. So I am going to show you his explanation to the Dalai Lama about this experience of the brain: What happens when we experience something? Is there a sense of "Self?" In fact, this Dr. Wolf Singer came to a conclusion there is no seat of the "Self" and this is what he has to say.



The areas of the cerebral cortex about 100 of them which are interconnected very, very intensively one with the other but there is no evidence for a convergence center or the pyramid of hierarchical organization. These areas they deal with very different inputs like from the eye from the ear from the touch senses.



And then there are areas which belong to the so-called limbic system, which attach emotional connotations to the contents of conscious experience, so there's no single place in the brain where an observer could be located or a command structure could be implemented over the “Self”.



The Brain is a highly distributed,
dynamical system that lacks a
singular convergence center

No coordinator

No observer

No seat of the self

It's a highly distributed system in which many, many functions occur simultaneously, and there's no coordinator; they self organized, so there's no coordinator, no observer, no seat of the "Self."

So there you have it; that is the conclusion of one of the top brain scientists in the world. He is not a Buddhist; he is just an independent researcher. And from all the experiments he has done on the brain, he has come to the conclusion, and these are the statements that he has made. The brain is a highly distributed dynamical system but lacks the singular convergent center. Distributed and dynamical: what does that mean? That means whenever we see, hear, smell, taste, touch something that can be as many as 100 different regions in the brain that is activated at the same time, and all these different regions of the brain are processing different components of the experience of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, or touching.

So when we see color, the color is being processed in some parts of the brain and then the contour, the objects, the recognition of the person, the recognition of components in the image, all these are processed by different parts of the brain, that's right, it is distributed, it's dynamical. And he points out that it lacks a singular convergence center in the brain; that means there is no one part in the brain that brings all this together in one place. It is distributed and they somehow manage to organize themselves; all these different parts of the brain manage to organize among themselves without being coming to a central location for processing. There is no coordinator in the brain to coordinate our experiences; there was no observer in the brain to observe our experiences, and most importantly his final conclusion there is no evidence that there is a seat of the "Self" in the brain.

In another words, the same scientists have come to this conclusion, there is nothing inside the brain that points to how this notion of "Self" resides or where does it reside; there is no brain region that determines there is a "Self" there. So in another word, how does this "Self" arise? It does not exist in the brain. It doesn't arise in the brain as a function of the brain. It actually arises as a function of the mind and what I call "When Self comes to Mind." So I'm going to show you another very well-known brain scientist, Antonio Damasio. In fact he wrote a book on this title "When Self Comes to Mind". So let's take a look at what Antonio Damasio has to say before we analyze his conclusion.



1. a mind, which is a flow of mental images

What is consciousness? What is a conscious mind?

Well first of all it is a mind which is a flow of mental images and of course considered images that can be sensory patterns, visual such as you're having right now in relation to the stage and me, or auditory images as you're having now in relation to my words, that flow of mental images is mind. But there's something else that we all experiencing in this room. We are not passive exhibitors of visual or auditory or tactile images. We have "Selves".

- 1. a mind, which is a flow of mental images**
- 2. a self**

We have a need that is automatically present in our minds right now. We own our minds and we have a sense that it's every one of us that is experiencing this, not the person who is sitting next to you. So in order to have a conscious mind, you have a “Self” within the conscious mind.

1. a mind, which is a flow of mental images

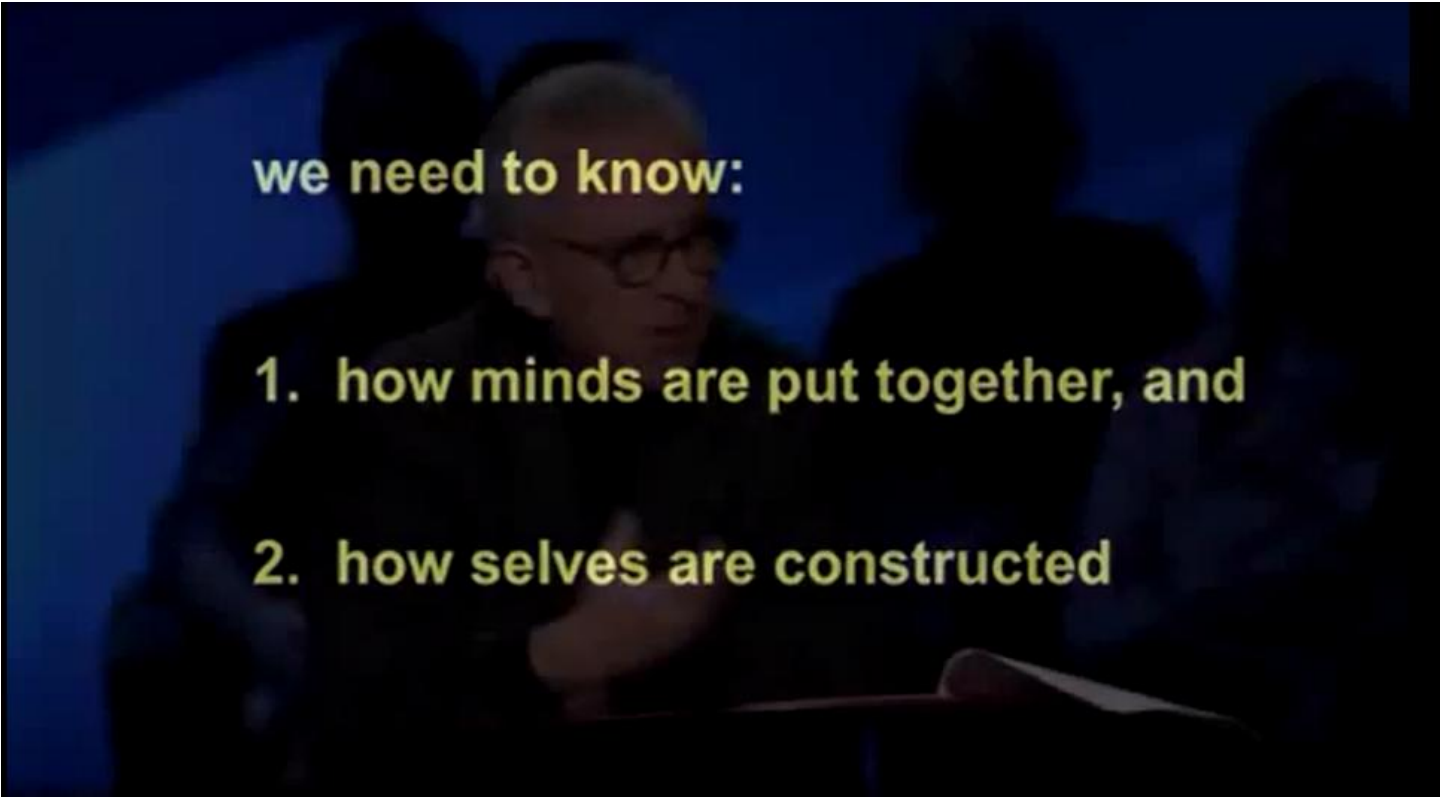
2. a self

a conscious mind is *a mind with a self in it*

a self introduces a subjective perspective in the mind

we are only fully conscious when self comes to mind

So the conscious mind is a mind with the self in it. The self introduces a subjective perspective in the mind, and we are only fully conscious when "Self" comes to mind.



we need to know:

1. how minds are put together, and

2. how selves are constructed

So what we need to know to even address this mystery is number one how minds are put together in the brain and number two how cells are constructed, but what about the “Self.” The “Self” is really the elusive problem, and for a long time people did not even want to touch it, and because they say, “How can you have this solid reference point, this stability that is required to maintain the continuity of cells day after day.”

the solution:

we generate brain maps of the body's interior and use them as the reference for all the other maps.

And I thought about a solution to this problem; it is the following: we generate brain maps of the body's interior and use them as the reference for all other maps. So let me tell you just little bit about how I came to this. I came to this because if you're going to have a reference that we know as self, the "me", the "I", in our own processing, we need to have something that is stable, something that does not deviate much from day to day. Well it so happens that we have a singular body, we have one body not 2 not 3 and so that is just the beginning, that is just one reference point which is the body.

Basically he pointed out that it is the body. We have this body that gives us a reference point. So let's examine some of his statements when "Self" comes to mind.



WHEN SELF COMES TO MIND



1. Mind – continuous flow of mental images;
2. A conscious mind is a mind with a “self” in it;
3. The self introduces a subjective perspective in the mind;
4. We are only fully conscious when self comes to mind;
5. We need to know:
 - i. How minds are put together in the brain;
 - ii. How selves are constructed;
6. We generate brain maps of the body’s interior, and uses them as a reference point for all other maps of the world;
7. The body and the experience of the body becomes the reference point for the self.

Antonio Damasio



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It says mind is a continuously flow of mental images. Basically that is what it is. Whenever our sense organ has been stimulated, a mental image arises. So it is a continuously flow, endless flow of mental images arising from the “Pañca-Khandha”; continuously arising. That's really what makes up the mind, continuous flow of mental images. And then he says a conscious mind is a mind with “Self” in it, and here is the definition of “Consciousness” by scientists, that scientists have defined what “Consciousness” to mean that the awareness of a “Self” in the world. So he says a conscious mind is a mind with a “Self” in it. He is not saying that it exists. He's saying that there is a “Self” in the mind, not in the body, in the mind, so it arises in the mind. And he says the “Self” introduces a subjective perspective in the mind, and this is the subjective “Self”, the "Attā", that arises when we experience the stimulation from the environment, stimulating our sense organs.

So he says we are only fully conscious when “Self” comes to mind, so again here's the definition of “Consciousness”, that we become fully conscious when the sense of “Self” arises in the mind.

And we need to know two important things: (1) how minds are put together in the brain and (2) how the cells are constructed, so we are going to examine these two from the Buddhist perspective. And we generate brain maps of the body's interior and use them as a reference point for all other maps of the world and here you have the term the “World”. So the mind actually begins to generate maps of various parts of the body and use that as a reference and say "Oh there is this body in the mind and then there is a world out there." So basically that is what the scientists have defined. And finally he says the body and the experience of the body becomes the reference point for the "Self", so the body is the reference point for the “Self”.

Now let's take a look at another perspective, this perspective of how the subjective “Self” arises, how we personalize our experience. I am going to show you an experiment from psychology, where they actually use the fake hand that means a dummy hand, and they strap it to the body of somebody and somehow trick that person into believing that that is his hand and see how he reacts to it. Take a look at this experiment called the fake hand experiment when people begin to personalize even a fake object to be part of the body, and you can see how the personalization process happens in real life.



Jonah is recreating a classic psychology experiment. The rubber hand illusion is a funny hack of the brain where you can convince people very quickly that this rubber arm is actually their own arm. He's setting up a stand at Venice Beach where he'll test volunteers to see if they can experience sensations in a hand that's not theirs. Welcome to the rubber hand experiment. Would you put your left hand right here and put your right hand right here? Jonas has participants hide their right hand out of sight behind a divider; going to drape this as if it's your real hand. While he places a rubber hand on the table in front of him. Let's stare at this hand. Jonah primes participants by brushing both the fake and real hand simultaneously; a process which helps the brain link the feeling to the fake arm. Feel like you're doing that to my hand, but that is not my hand; my hand is over there, so that is kind of weird, kind of weird. Now that Jonah has linked this volunteer's brain to the new hand; he's got an even bigger surprise for her. Oh my goodness when you hit that thing I thought I was going to lose my hand that was so scary. And it really felt like, felt like I felt like that I couldn't move those fingers if I wanted to. My brain decided that it was that I can feel that you're hitting that you are hitting me. It's so strange how it does that.

Impressive right! Let's see how many other people fall prey to this mind game. My name is Jonah. Okay so you keep on staring at that hand. That was crazy. That was crazy. Although around 10% of the participants weren't able to mentally connect the fake hand to their body. Did it feel like I smashed your hand at all? No. Most felt some kind of fathom sensation if not actual pain. Jonah is hacking into these people's mental body maps, causing them to connect information in accurately.

So you can see when he stimulates the hand by brushing against the hand and they are seeing this fake hand; somehow the mind connects this fake hand as "Oh this is my hand." Now that's the process of personalization. He began by brushing one hand, by brushing the real hand but at the same time showing them he's brushing the fake hand and that seeing the fake hand being brushed and feeling the brushing. The feeling is the "Vedanā". The feeling of the brushing gets them the mind to link his fake hand as if it is the real hand and that's really what happened there; the personalization process happening.

Let's look at the other extreme. When this sense of "Self" and sometimes we call this sense of "Self" "Ego"; when this sense of "Self" is afraid of losing face. What do we do, we actually alienate. We actually break away from what happens out there. We alienate the experience. So this is alienating the objective experience out of the fear of losing face because this sense of "Self" is very often what we call the "Ego".



And we can capture our ancient instincts in action. How will unsuspecting shoppers react to a pile of cans we've rigged to collapse? I didn't do it. Until that moment the shoppers all around us are simply people we are unlikely to see again and we don't pay them much attention. But the split second the pile collapses. I didn't touch it; I didn't even touch it. We care what passer's by think of us. Suddenly a reputation is on the line. And we are keen to leap to its defense. I didn't take it from the bottom I swear. It's a reminder on how important our reputation can be.

So when the "ego" is threatened, we begin to alienate the threats and that is the opposite of personalizing or attaching or clinging; we alienate ourselves from the rest of the world. So you can see one of the ladies at the end there that she was holding to one piece, and she even said I didn't even touch it, but she was holding to one of the pieces.



What Is "Self"?



Is it an entity ("thing"), or a concept ("idea")?

So what is this thing called "Self?" Is it an entity or thing or is it a concept or an idea? First the scientists have pointed out: it is not an entity; it does not exist. And it is not an intellectual concept either, nor is it a rational conclusion. There is no logical basis for the arising of this sense of "Self".



What Is "Self"?



Is it an entity ("thing"), or a concept ("idea")?

- Not an entity – it does not "exist";
- Neither an intellectual concept nor a rational conclusion – there is no logical basis for the arising;
- It is an **emotional concept** – arises with our unconscious emotional reaction to feelings when we experience the environment;

And what it is, is really an "Emotional Concept"; it arises with our unconscious "Emotional Reaction" to feelings when we experience the environment.



What Is "Self"?



Is it an entity ("thing"), or a concept ("idea")?

- Not an entity – it does not "exist";
- Neither an intellectual concept nor a rational conclusion – there is no logical basis for the arising;
- It is an **emotional concept** – arises with our unconscious emotional reaction to feelings when we experience the environment;
- Arises most strongly in conjunction with environmental and societal interactions...
- Our attempt to rationalize the "subjective experience";
- Arises with personalization of the body and its experiences...

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It arises most strongly in conjunction with environmental and societal interactions. That means it arises when we interact with the environment; it arises when you interact with each other, societal interactions.

It is our attempt, the mind trying to rationalize this subjective experience; the experience "I" see something out there; this "I".

So it is an attempt to rationalize what is this "I"; that's how the sense of self arises.

It arises with the personalization of the body and the experience of the body.



HOW THE "SELF" ARISES



- The Subjective Self (**Atta**) came into being when emotional reaction (**Taṇhā**) to sensations led to personalization (**Upādāna**) of the reaction as "mine" and alienating the Objective World (**Loka**) as "not mine";
- The Subjective (**Upādāna**) is personalized;
- The Objective is alienated;
- Giving rise to the notion of being Self (**Atta**) in the World (**Loka**) –
"Existential Thinking" (**Bhava**).

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So in the words of my teacher Venerable Dr. Punnañi he has stated how this sense of self arises.

The subjective "Self", the "Attā", came into being when emotional reaction, "Taṇhā", to sensations led to personalization, "Upādāna", of the reaction as "mine" and alienating the objective world, the "Loka", as not "mine". So basically the sense of "Self" came into being when we begin to react to feelings: pleasant feelings, unpleasant feelings, and neither pleasant nor unpleasant feelings. And this reaction is called "Taṇhā".

Of course, the word "*Taṇhā*" is often translated as a "craving", that is just one of the translations. "Craving", I think that's not adequately do justice to explaining what really is "*Taṇhā*", that my teacher has pointed out. If you really want to understand "*Taṇhā*", then basically understand it as "emotional reaction". Our emotional reaction to sensations and sensations are pleasant, unpleasant, or neither pleasant nor unpleasant.

And this reaction leads us to want to personalize that experience, the "*Upādāna*", which is so often translated as clinging. We want to cling on to that and personalize that reaction as "mine": "I" am reacting, "I" am seeing, "I" am feeling. So the "I" sense of "Self" arises with that. And when that arises we begin to alienate the world from this experience and say, "Oh that is not mine; that is the world out there," the "*Loka*", out there, the objective world. So let's review what that statement means.

And then Venerable Dr. Punnaaji went on to say this subjective "Self" is personalized, the objective world is alienated, and this gives rise to notion of being "Self" in the world, the "*Attā*" in the "*Loka*", and this is really what he calls existential thinking and this existential thinking is "*Bhāva*", the thinking that we exist, the thinking of existence, existential thinking "*Bhāva*". So basically this is his brief explanation from the Buddha Dhamma, how the sense of "Self" arises.

Let's take a look at it scientifically and try to map out the whole process of what's going: the process of experience.



PROCESS OF EXPERIENCE



❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:



Experience is a chain reaction when environmental activity stimulates our sense organs, the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, and the body.



PROCESS OF EXPERIENCE



❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

PAÑCA-KHANDHA

- Rūpa – Image of Object
- Vedanā – Feeling
- Saññā – Sensation
- Saṅkhāra – Mental Construction
- Viññāna – Perception



- SIGHT
- HEARING
- SMELL
- TASTE
- TOUCH

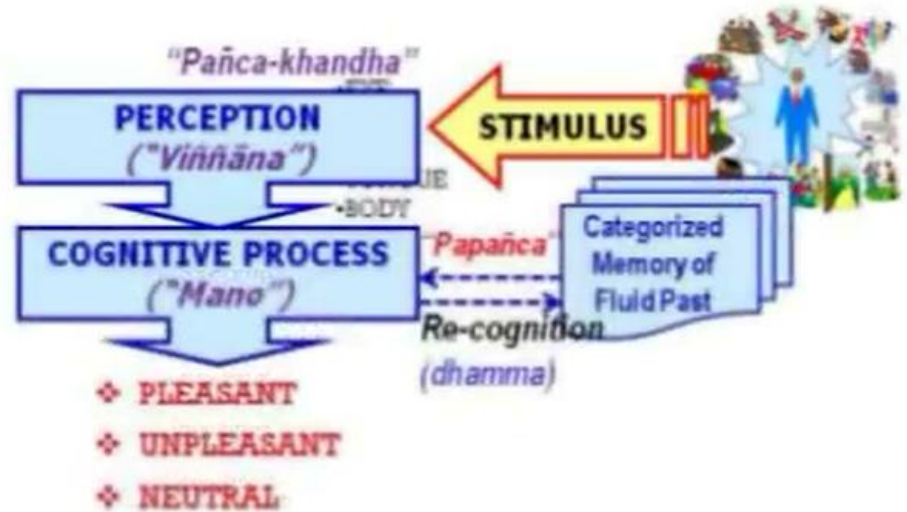
The *"Pañca-Khandha"* arises, the process of perception, and that leads to the arising of the perception, *"Viññāṇa."* As I mentioned, *"Viññāṇa"* here is being translated by Venerable Dr. Punnaji as "Perception" which is consistent with scientific, consistent with translations from the scientific field, the meaning of perception. So there is a perception that arises here, and with that the mind, there are two processes in the mind that arises, the *"Mano"* and the *"Citta"*. So when this perception arises, we're able to experience seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. And these two processes arise, the *"Mano"* and the *"Citta"*.



PROCESS OF EXPERIENCE



❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:



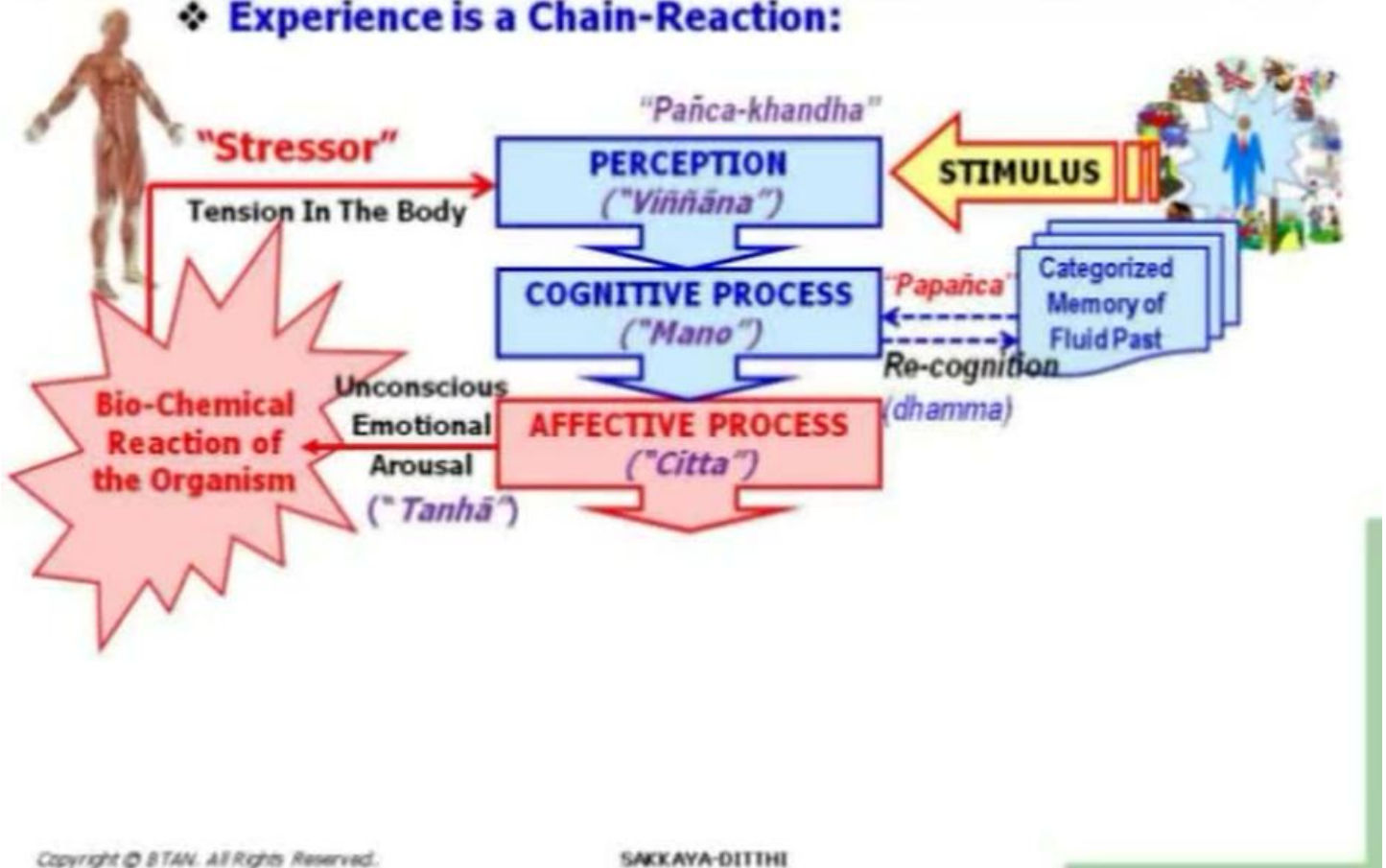
The "*Mano*" arises trying to interpret what has been experienced, the perception there, and then with the feeling from the "*Pañca-Khandha*", there is a feeling, "*Vedanā*", which is pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral which is neither pleasant nor unpleasant.



PROCESS OF EXPERIENCE



❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:



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The "Citta" arises to try to interpret that feeling. The "Mano" interprets the perception by answering the question, "What is this that I have just seen?" Basically the "Mano" is trying to interpret what is seen and give meaning to it, giving a "Nāma" to the "Rūpa." But the "Citta" arises to try to interpret, "How does this affect me?", and this sense of "Self" arises. And at the same time when the "Citta" arises, there is a biochemical chain reaction in the brain and that actually causes the body to react, and then there is sensation in the body. Every time we see, hear, smell, taste, or touch something, there is a sensation being triggered; we don't realize it.

"Nāma" means "Name".

The reason why we don't realize it, for some of us who don't realize it, could be that this sensation, with the chemical reaction given rise to bodily sensation, might be so mild that you don't realize it. Or you may not be mindful enough about what happens in your body, not to realize something happening in the body, like your heart beating faster and so on. I can say one word and that will trigger some feelings in some of you. I just say one word Asam Laksa; some of you will feel sourness in the mouth, right? Now if I didn't say it to you, you might not be mindful that is happening, but that is exactly what is going on whenever we see, hear, smell, taste, or touch anything. The biochemical reaction arises, there is some sensation in the body, and this sensation is then felt, and this feeling gives rise to a lot of activity that comes afterwards.



PROCESS OF EXPERIENCE



❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:



"Dukkha"



"Pañca-khandha"

PERCEPTION
("Viññāna")

STIMULUS



COGNITIVE PROCESS
("Mano")

Papañca
Categorized
Memory of
Fluid Past

Re-cognition
(dhamma)

AFFECTIVE PROCESS
("Citta")

Physiological
Disturbance

And this feeling that is felt is a physiological disturbance; that means the disturbance in the body; the body is no longer still. The body is disturbed once we see, hear, smell, taste, and touch something. That means once a sense organ is stimulated the body is disturbed. And then we begin to experience this as a reaction. We experience "Soka", "Parideva": grief and lamentation.

Now let's take a look at this extreme instance when we feel pain. The feeling of pain is real because it's something pressing on the skin, pressing on the pressure receptors under the skin, the pain receptors under the skin, which then sends a signal to the brain, "you're feeling pain". This is real. We can't stop that but what comes afterwards is all happening in the mind. The mind begins to cling on to that experience and begin to react to that experience and by clinging on and reacting to the feeling of pain; the mind gets disturbed. Now the disturbance is happening in the mind no longer in the body alone. So the disturbance to the body leads to the disturbance in the mind.

Let's take a look at this extreme example of this very famous personality by the name of Tim Cridland very famous. He does a lot of shows. Here they're actually using a set of nails that you can see here, pressing on his body until he can't take it, but he never screamed; he never reacted because he has trained his mind not to react to pain; this is the most famous person who has trained his mind not to react to pain. They only stop the experiment when they realize that these nails may begin to pierce the skin and cause bleeding. And also the pressing of the nails on his body is stopping him from breathing, and they stop the experiment because of that, so it is an extreme instance.

Take a look at this experiment.



We all have heard mind over matter, but is it possible for your brain to turn off its response to pain? Tim Cridland can take anything you can dish out; he claims he's trained his brain to simply ignore pain. Pain is a learned response and being a learned response can also be unlearned. To prove his mastery, Cridland agreed to be squeezed against an upright bed of nails as pressure is gradually applied. Paramedics monitor brain activity in vital signs as Cridland goes into a meditative state to refocus the pain away from his brain. He's able to withstand 1200 lbs, the equivalent of a small car before halting the experiment. His vital signs support his claim as they show no significant changes. He felt no pain, he just couldn't breathe. So apparently our brains can block things out.

So you can see the mind can actually block out the pain, and here is a man who is subject to these nails pressing on his body 1200 lbs; 1,200 lb is the equivalent of the weight of a small car. Imagine you lie there and you have a small car on top of you, that is really what he has experienced and they had to stop it because he couldn't breathe anymore, but he never yelled out in pain, he never showed signs of pain; he has trained his mind. In fact he's actually a meditator, but not necessarily a Buddhist meditator, but he has managed to put his mind in a state of calm, that he does not react to the pain.



WHAT ARE EMOTIONS?

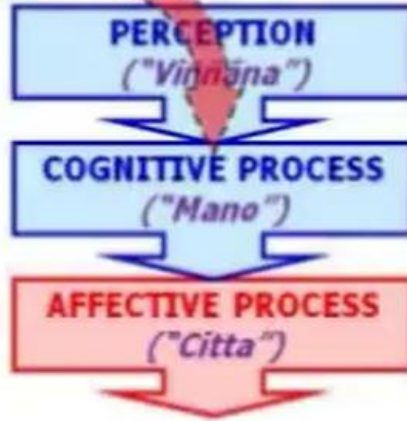


❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

"Dukkha"



"Pañca-khandha"



EMOTIONS:

- ❖ Physiological
- ❖ Psychological

➤ **AROUSAL**

➤ **REACTION**

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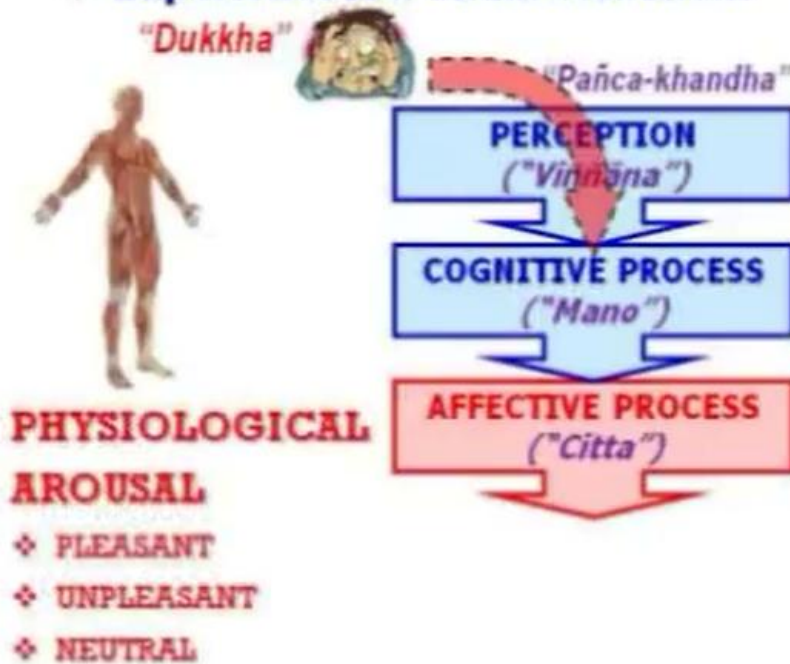
So what happens when these pain sensations are felt in the body that gives rise to emotional arousal and reactions? Emotions come into 2 forms: physiological and psychological. Until about 100 years ago scientists always thought emotion is only mental or psychological but actually it is both. Here already is happening in the body; the physiological part and then it gives to arousal and reaction.



WHAT ARE EMOTIONS?



❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:



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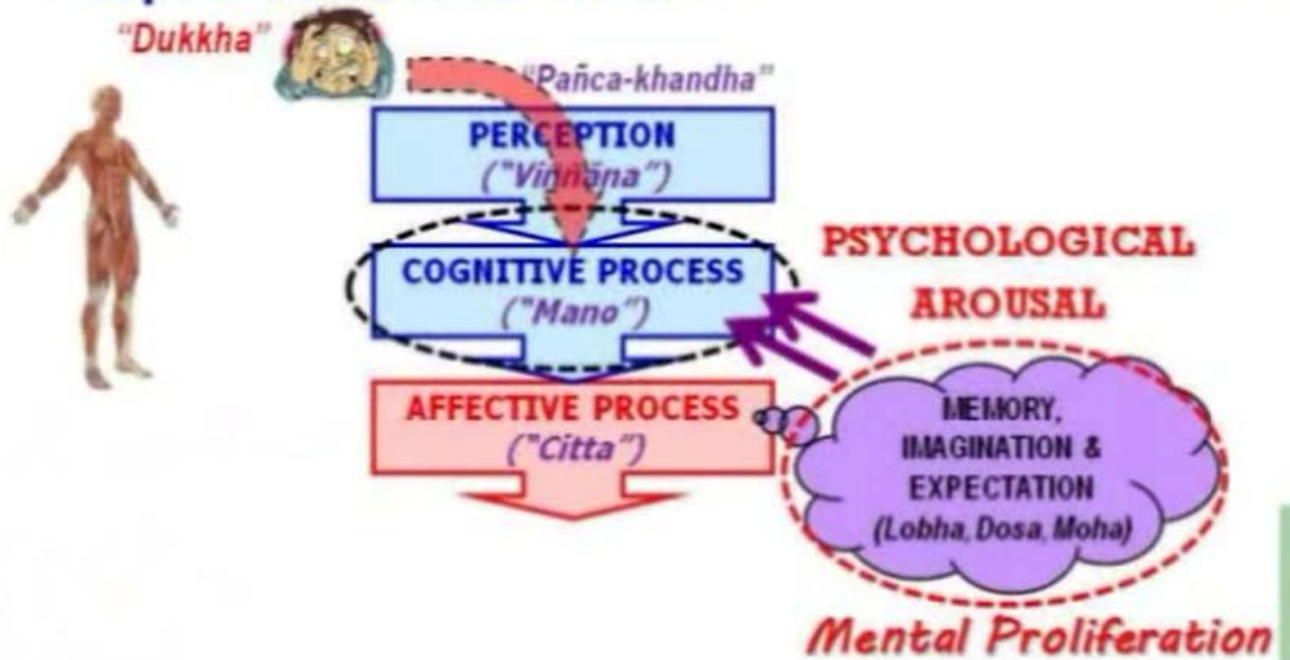
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Let's take a look at arousal. This physiological arousal is this sensation in the body; it is either pleasant, unpleasant, or neither pleasant nor unpleasant.



WHAT ARE EMOTIONS?

❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:



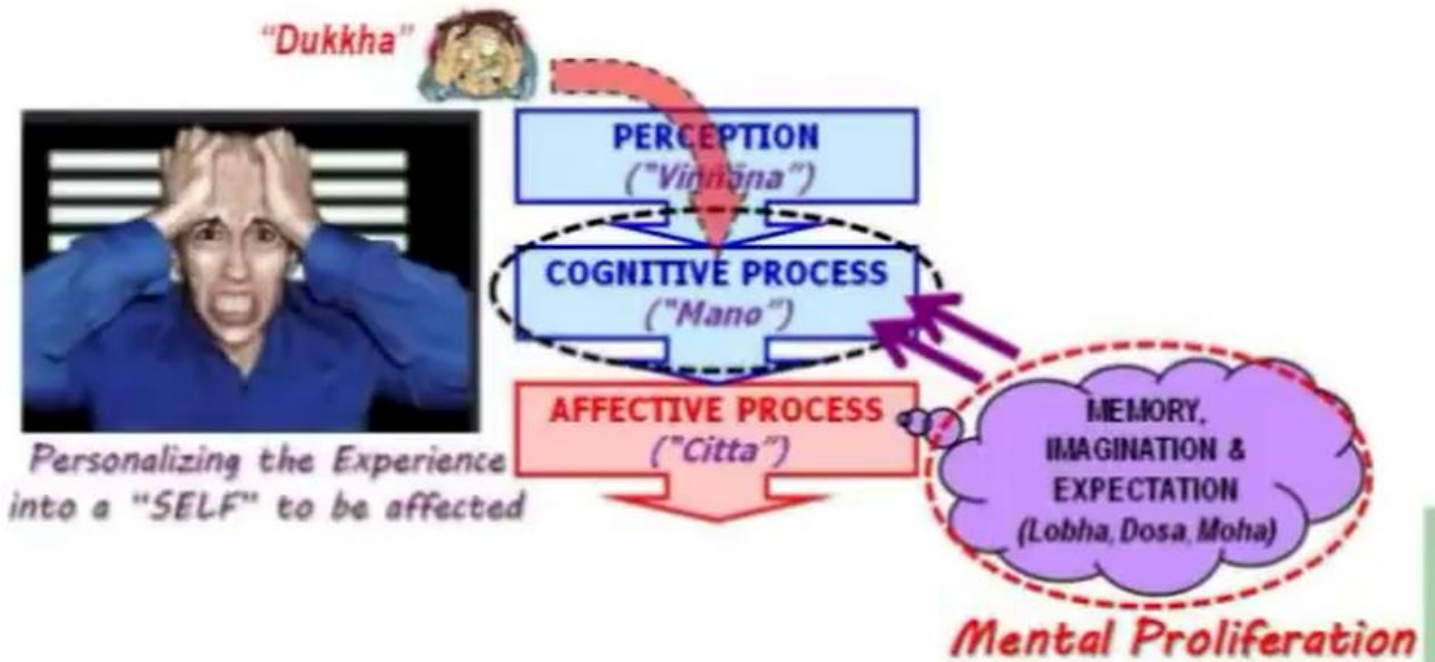
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There is also a mental arousal, psychological arousal. We call it mental proliferation, where it triggers the arising of memory, imagination, expectation in response to this bodily sensations and this disturbs the mind. The 'Citta' which is the emotional mind arises with this memory, imagination, expectation and begins to disturb the rational mind, the "Mano", the thinking mind, the intellectual mind and this is a psychological arousal.



EMOTIONAL REACTION



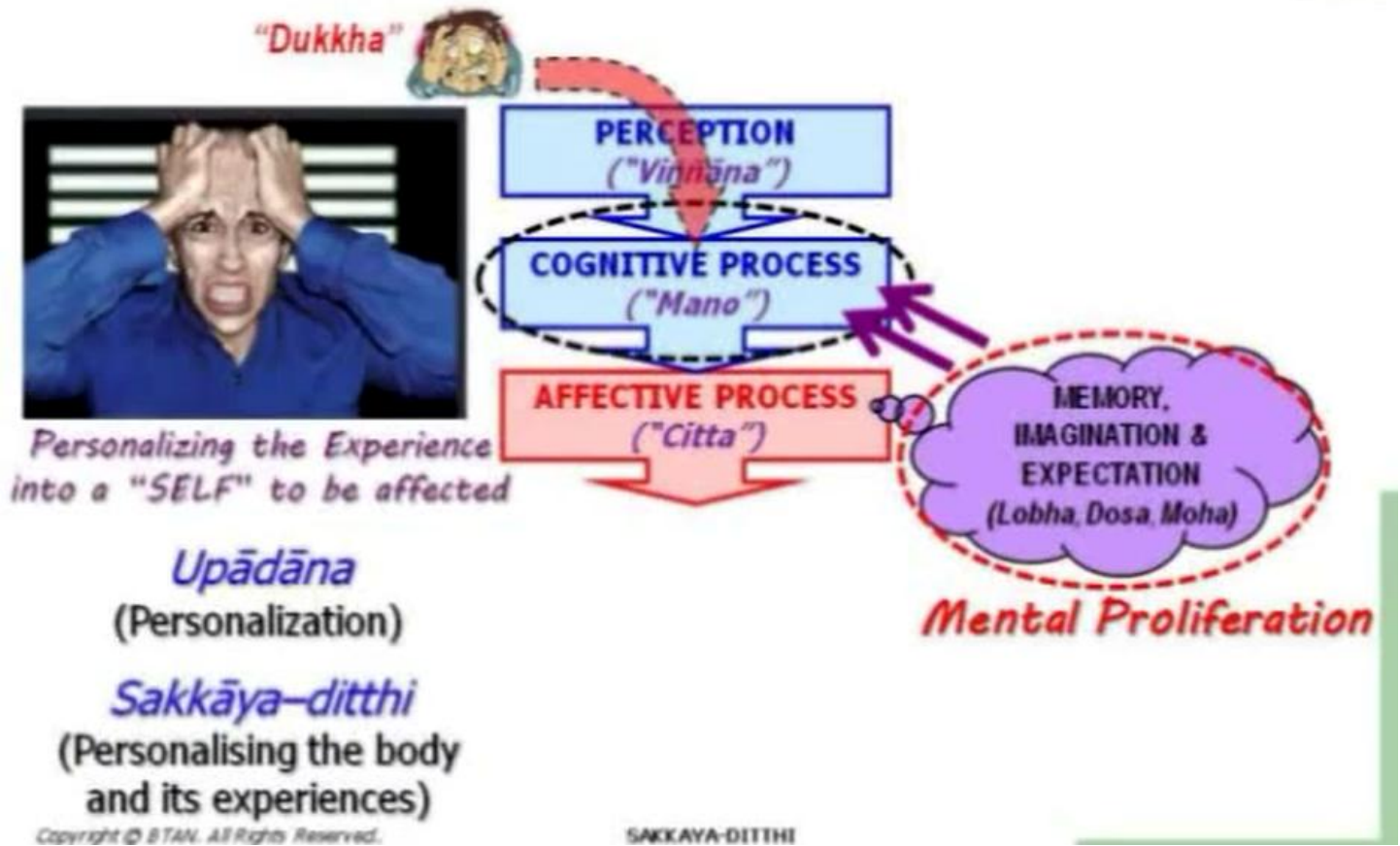
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And this disturbance causes reaction. So the emotional reaction that follows is that we begin to experience personalization. We want to personalize this experience; personalizing the experience into the sense of "Self" that is affected. We feel something and then we say "Who is feeling this thing?" It is the "I" and that arises.



EMOTIONAL REACTION

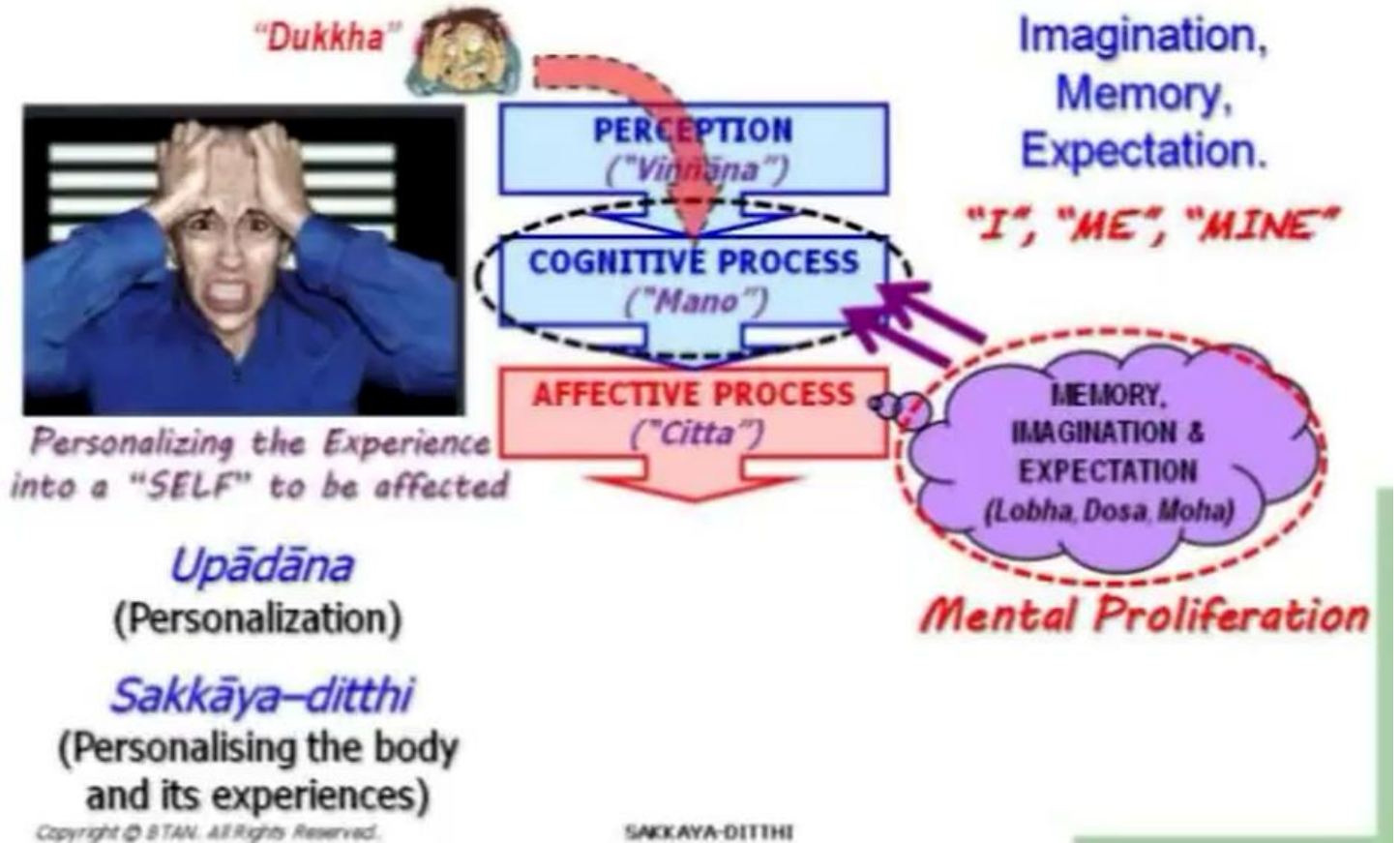


And this process is called "*Upādāna*."

And then that is when we begin to personalize the body and the experience of the body into the sense of "Self" and this is the scientific explanation of "*Sakkāya-Diṭṭhi*".



EMOTIONAL REACTION



So memory, imagination, expectation are arising, we begin to have this sense of "I", "me", and "mine" and this is the mental proliferation.

So now let's take a look at the same person being experimented on this time in the laboratory to see how far he can go when they press something on his backbone until he has to stop it.



Every square inch of human skin is packed with over four-hundred pain receptors; there are certain areas that are extra sensitive. Using the hard narrow point of an algometer, Dr. Hands will attempt to find the limits of Tim's pain threshold; he'll apply increased pressure to a location on Tim's spine known for its sensitivity. If the pain gets too great, Tim can stop the test at any time by hitting the buzzard. So are we ready, Tim? I am ready. The average pressure a human can withstand from the algometer pushing down in this area is between 80 and 110 pounds. So Tim can reaches score in the 200 to 300 range, it will be incredible. So this should be the most sensitive spot we're going to directly, and we call it the spinous spot, the point of spine that is sticking out and where we're going to be putting pressure directly in and this is supposedly the sensitive area, so let's see what happens. 100 PSI, 150 psi, whoa 200 PSI, 250 psi, 300, 400. Whoa this is unbelievable. 500 he is literally off the charts. 600 I may need some help pushing this thing down. 700 this is unbelievable. What is that say? 781 unbelievable. I can't push any harder amazing. His body is responding to the pressure you can see the red but neurologically his pain receptors are must be used to the sensitivity. So let me save this.

Astonishingly even with a hard narrow point pressing directly on this highly sensitive part of the spine, Tim is able to withstand the weight of over for grown men, and Tim claims this incredible ability to block out pain is all due to the power of his mind. I apply something else's and other techniques of attention redirection to take my attention away from pain; basically put the pain in my control, which actually causes my physical reaction to be different.

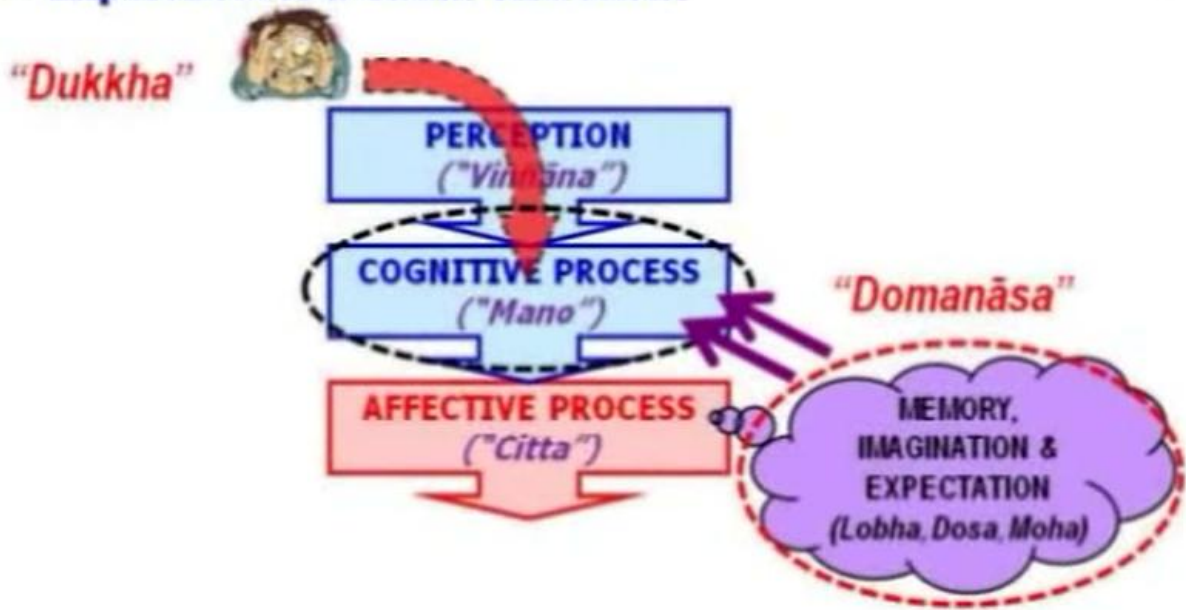
So you've heard how he has done it. He actually takes his mind away from the experience of the pain. By taking his mind away from that physical feeling, he's no longer attaching "himself," he's no longer attaching the mind to this experience. He has detached this experience and therefore he is able to withstand the pain, and that is actually what he has done; he has trained his mind not to pay attention to the pain and by not paying attention he, therefore, has detached his mind; he's no longer clinging; no longer clinging to that experience and that is really how he has done it.



EMOTIONAL REACTION



❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:



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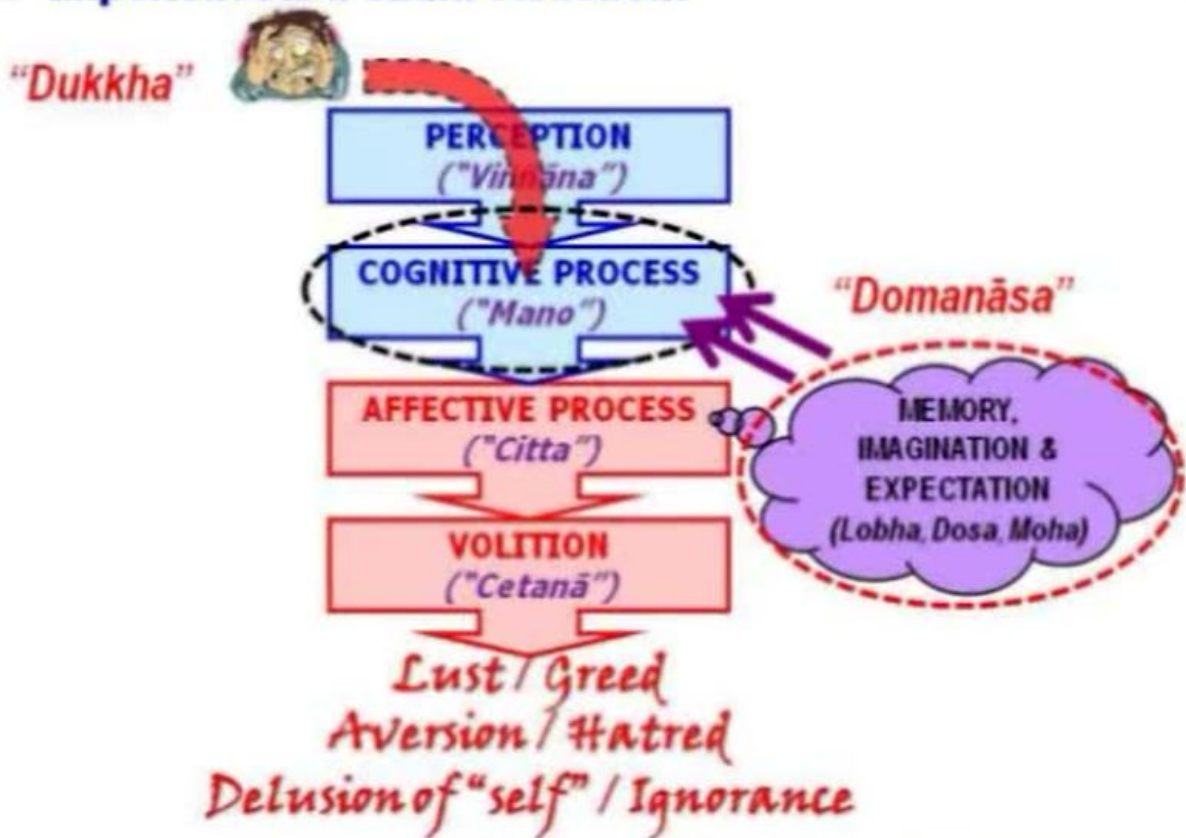
So we look at this situation again when there is physical pain and then the emotional arousal begins and then it starts to disturb the mind, that the disturbance is "Domanāsa". The physical pain is "Dukkha". So Buddha had pointed out that these are 2 two forms of suffering: (1) the "Dukkha" which is a physical suffering and (2) the "Domanāsa", the emotional suffering.



EMOTIONAL REACTION



❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:



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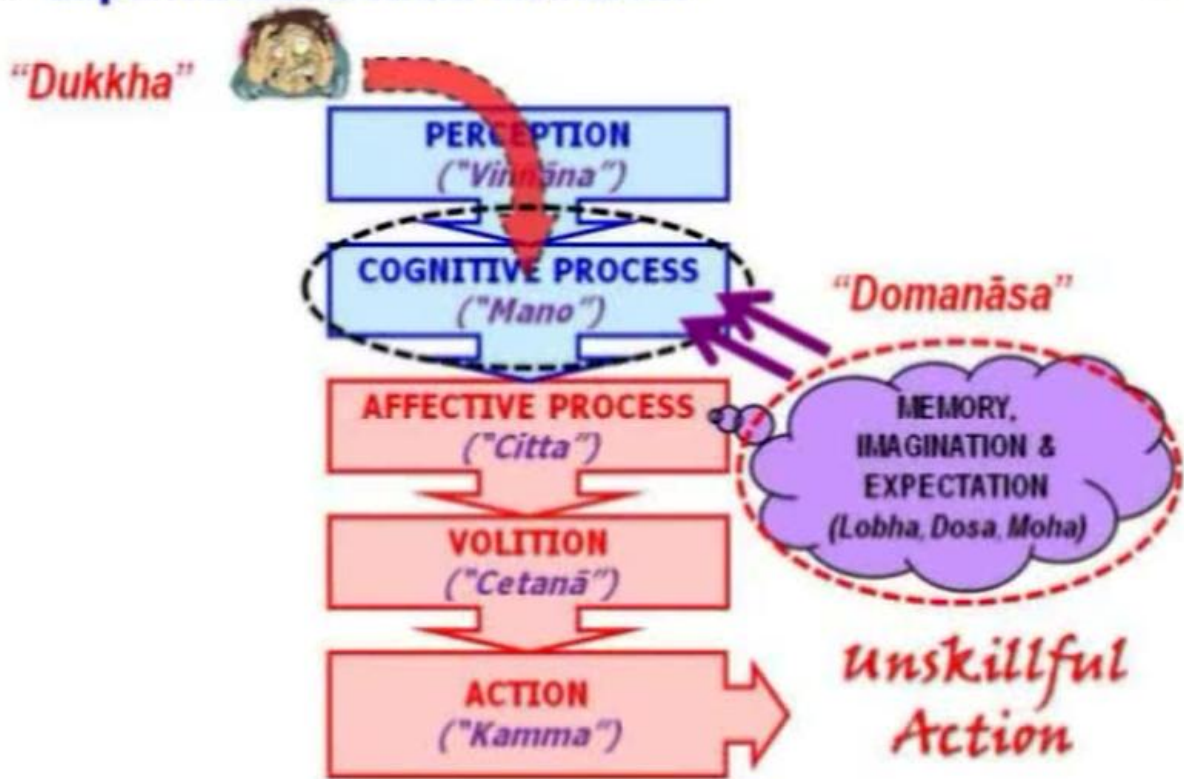
And with that suffering comes, volition "*Cetanā*", to want to do something, to want to react. And this reaction is in the form of lust or greed for something pleasurable, aversion or hatred for something that is unpleasant or painful, or a delusion of the "Self", "*Moha*", or ignorance when it is neither pleasant nor unpleasant. So the experience of something that is pleasurable, we begin to cling on to that experience and feel lustful for it and this is "*Lobha*". The experience that is painful we want to avoid it, aversion, or we want to get rid of it, hatred or ill will towards to that experience and that is "*Dosa*". So therefore we have this reaction and this is the reaction, "*Cetanā*", is the volition.



EMOTIONAL REACTION



❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:



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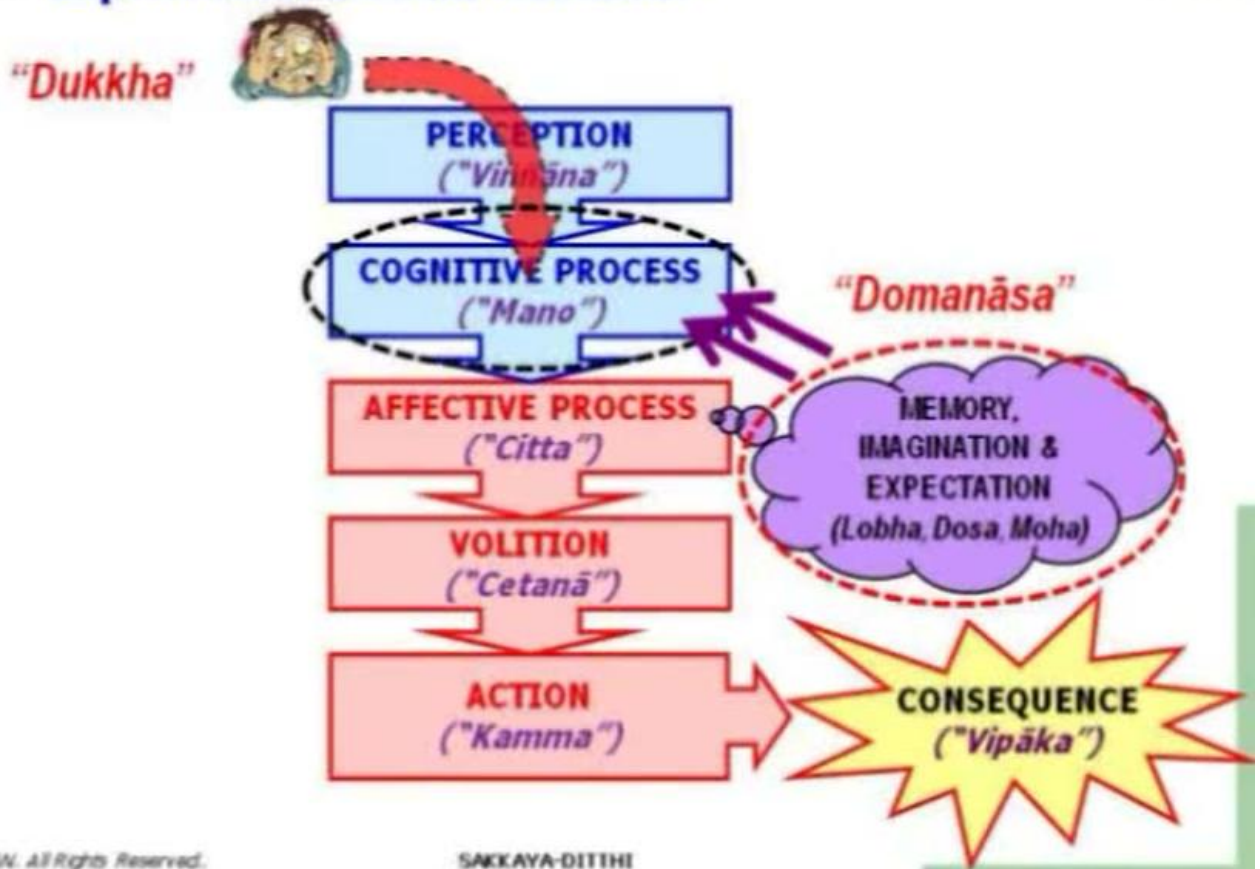
"*Kamma*" is the action that follows the volition; the volition is the intention to do something; the "*Kamma*" is the actual action that is being taken, which is the unskillful action.



EMOTIONAL REACTION



❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:



And whatever it is action that we take, it leads to consequence which is "Vipāka". Basically this is the emotional reaction whenever we experience something, whenever our sense organ is stimulated.



CONCLUSION



▶ Sensory experiences are dependent on the presence of the necessary conditions – which are unstable and unreliable;

So in conclusion, sensory experiences are dependent on the presence of necessary conditions, which are unstable and unreliable. This is "*Anicca*" because these experiences are unstable and unreliable.



CONCLUSION



- ▶ Sensory experiences are dependent on the presence of the necessary conditions – which are unstable and unreliable;
- ▶ Mind interprets sense experiences by referring to Memory of past experiences, Imagination of future outcomes, and Expectation of present demands – emotional arousals;
- ▶ Mind and body are intertwined (psychosomatic) leading to unconscious emotional reactions which disturb the mind;

Mind interprets sense experiences by referring to memory, imagination, and expectation, and this is the emotional arousal. And the mind and body are intertwined and in psychology they call this psychosomatic; "psycho" meaning the mind, "soma" meaning the body, so the mind and body are intertwined. So what happens in a mind affects the body, what happens in the body affects the mind. And this leads to unconscious emotional reactions, the "*Taṇhā*" part, and that disturbs the mind, and this is "*Dukka*".



CONCLUSION



- ▶ Sensory experiences are dependent on the presence of the necessary conditions – which are unstable and unreliable;
- ▶ Mind interprets sense experiences by referring to Memory of past experiences, Imagination of future outcomes, and Expectation of present demands – emotional arousals;
- ▶ Mind and body are intertwined (psychosomatic) leading to unconscious emotional reactions which disturb the mind;

All this leads to "*Dukkha*".



CONCLUSION



- ▶ Sensory experiences are dependent on the presence of the necessary conditions – which are unstable and unreliable;
- ▶ Mind interprets sense experiences by referring to Memory of past experiences, Imagination of future outcomes, and Expectation of present demands – emotional arousals;
- ▶ Mind and body are intertwined (psychosomatic) leading to unconscious emotional reactions which disturb the mind;
- ▶ This disturbance leads one to personalize one's experience as "I", "Me", or "Mine"; giving rise to the notion of a "self";
- ▶ We are simply organisms in an environment, and our conscious experience is an impersonal process that depends on conditions, there is no "self" making it happen.

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SAKKAYA-DITTHI

And finally this disturbance leads one to personalize one's experience as "I", "Me", or Mine", giving rise to the notion of a "Self" in the world. But the reality, the reality of the matter is that we are simply organisms in an environment. Our conscious experience is an impersonal process that depends on changing conditions in the environment. There is no "Self" that is making this happening. There is no "Self" that is being affected by this happening.



CONCLUSION



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And that is "Anattā."

"Anicca", "Dukkha", "Anattā."

I'll end my presentation with this final clip, so you can see extreme pain tolerance some of you who cannot withstand gory things you may turn away for now.



In 1947 mysterious Dutchman Mirin Dajo confounded on looking scientists and doctors when apparently without any pain or physical damage he did this. Dajo is unflinching as his assistant skewers him straight through the torso with a 28 inch fencing foil. We can see the skin on his chest bulged; that's a solid steel blade passes through it, but how can this happen without leaving him dead or was it just an elaborate to trick? To answer these questions, Data Girl has solicited the services of a leading authority on the feats of Mirin Dajo. Ali Bongo is a highly respected magician with a city named he's being a member of the inner magic circle that's the circle within the magic circle for 20 years so he knows how to spot a trick. I want to find out more about Mirin Dajo. It looks absolutely incredible what he does. Is he really doing it or is it an illusion? No, I think he is doing it I'd had seen with colleagues of magic circle and we all agreed that this is not a trick. It was real and I mean it was a real sword going through a real body.

But Dajo didn't stop at one hole. In this footage his helper punctures another hole from one side to the other, seen through what looks like his abdomen. How is he doing it? He went to India and talked to the Mystics. The people who pass knives through the cheeks and skin and things like that and certainly he found out the best way to present it and do it from possibly from these people. The thing is I have never seen and Indian Mystics do something as strong as that. So Dajo may have learned the safe method of passing a blade through his body from Indian Mystics.

So you can see he did not react and with that I end my presentation.